

! This example commentary is for training purposes only. Copying or replicating responses from this example for use on a portfolio violates TPA policies. Portfolios may be screened for originality using software for detecting plagiarism. Candidates submitting a portfolio for scoring must confirm they are the sole author of the commentaries and other writing. Failure to adhere to scoring policies may void scores and cause a report to the institution or state agency associated with the submission.

1. Lessons shown in video

The first clip is from lesson one, the second clip is from lesson two.

2. Promoting a positive environment

The first clip shows a segment of my first lesson of this unit. In this clip, I demonstrated mutual respect for the students by creating an environment where the learning is comfortable. The students show their respect for me by actively listening to my instruction and demonstration, and offering questions and comments when I ask questions (V1: 0:00-2:30). In this section of the video, I ask the students if they have seen a potato peeler before and what other things they would use this tool for. This strategy engages them in the content, but also helps them make connections of what we are doing to things they may have done in the past. They mentioned peeling apples and potatoes. Offering their input on these questions allows them to see how other students are making these connections. Also by making these connections, like how they may have used a peeler on Thanksgiving when peeling potatoes, helps create a rapport with the students just by allowing them to recognize that they have a freedom to offer their own ideas and opinions during my instruction (V1: 2:05-2:16). At about (V1: 2:30-2:45) I also encourage students to let me know if for some reason my document camera demonstration isn't working well, and they need to see in a different way. This allows me to be responsive to their needs. At (V1: 3:35), one of my students tells me that her cousin's name is Julienne, when I ask if anyone has ever heard of the Julienne style cut. Although this isn't necessary for instruction, I like that the environment we have in class gives the students opportunity to make connections like this and offer humor and fun to the classroom, because it encourages their participation and helps them pay attention. Also at about (V1: 9:47), I tell the students to let me know if they have any questions. This allows students to utilize me as a resource on an individual or group level instead of in front of the class.

In the second clip, during the second lesson, the students really have the opportunity to practice what they have been learning by cooking the stir-fry. At (V2: 0:00-0:25), you can see me talking to one of my students. He decided to cook the stir-fry vegetables by flipping them around in the pan with his wrist. Although it worried me for a moment, knowing that this is my student who has parents who own a restaurant, it built our rapport by allowing him to show me the vegetable flip, ending with me encouraging him to practice that more at home. At (V2: 4:38-5:27), I have some fun conversations about tofu with a few of my students, and try to break their expectations that tofu will taste bad. This shows my rapport with them and their comfort around me to be able to share their opinions about the things we are learning. Also in the videos, the students are often shown working in their groups while I am instructing other groups. This demonstrated the ability of several groups to engage in the learning task without much guidance from me, and allowed me to respond to the needs of the other groups that seemed to need my guidance more. I like this method of instruction because it not only allows me to focus on students that need more instruction, but allows the students to take part in their own learning and engage with the material in a very hands on way, letting them decide how to make learning happen.

3. Engaging students in learning

In the third video clip (Language Function), my students were able to make the connection between the stir-fry recipe and our identifying essential nutrients without much encouragement from me. Before they started making their stir-fry, I asked them to predict what nutrients they think will come from their stir-fry ingredients. This strategy was to get students to think about nutrients while cooking, to connect the information that we were learning to the application of cooking. In this clip, a group of three students showed that they were able to identify the ingredients in the stir-fry and the nutrients that come from them while discussing together, showing me that they understood the learning target.

Developing literacy knowledge and skills

Throughout my lesson, my instruction engaged students in developing all of the three above things: conceptual understanding, career and technical skills, and problem-solving strategies. In lesson one, I modeled how to julienne style cut a carrot. During my instruction in lesson one, I used key academic language like chef's knife, julienne, peeler, compost, and bolster (V1: 3:24-5:42). Learning about these key terms helped the students gain conceptual understanding for what the topic of knife skills will likely be about or will continue to be about. Then, by demonstrating the actual act of julienne style cutting the carrot, the students will be learning a career and technical skill, which they will be able to practice more when they do it themselves. In lesson two, the students had the opportunity to apply these family and consumer science topics, and career and technical skills when they cooked their stir-fry. They will have already cut the vegetables except for the cabbage but will continue to show their understanding of career and technical skills throughout all of lesson two by working with the food they are given, measuring and reading recipes, and preparing stir-fry. Also in the second video the students are seen showing their conceptual understanding of family and consumer science topics but also demonstrating problem solving because they are working in groups. At (V2: 2:06), one of my students is shown stirring her stir-fry and asking a group member if it is okay that the sauce is sticking to the pan a little bit. They determined that it was okay, but would have had to solve the problem quickly if it seemed to be something out of the ordinary.

Link to prior knowledge and assets

Throughout my three lessons there were several opportunities and instances where prior learning and personal, cultural and community assets connected with their new learning. However, specifically in the lesson one video clip, the students were able to connect the new learning to current learning by repeating to me what the knife I was holding is called and where to place my hands when handling the knife (V1: 4:49-5:37). In the second lesson and video clip, there is a moment where a couple of students and I are discussing their ideas about tofu (V1: 4:38). In some families tofu may be a staple ingredient used in cooking, however, most of my students didn't seem too thrilled about trying or eating it. This was fun for me to engage in students with because it connects what some other cultural aspects of cooking can bring to our classroom. I got to hear more about what some of their homes and cultures and communities are used to in terms of protein choice, and what most families like to eat. Several of the students mentioned here that they would like to use chicken in the next recipe we cook, and I told them I we could do that, but I also wanted them to try the tofu. Now I know that they would like to experiment cooking with chicken.

4. Deepen student learning

I elicited student responses to promote thinking and develop conceptual understanding in lesson one during the carrot julienne demonstration when I asked questions to keep students engaged in the lesson. At (V1: 1:18), I ask students what they should begin with when cutting their carrots. I then continue from here and ask questions about how many of the students have used peelers, whether or not they should peel toward or away from their bodies, and where to put excess compostable materials that they will not need. I also ask their knowledge about knives, what they are called and how to hold it (V1: 4:49). All of these things demonstrate eliciting student responses to little questions that the students need to understand in order for them to gain a conceptual understanding of knife skills, which is a family and consumer science topic, as well as a technical skill that they could use in a future culinary job. At (V1: 4:17) I also ask students what they think Julienne style carrots will look like. This addressed if any of them have heard of this cut before, and will help me determine where they are at with the material. It will also promote thinking on the student's part, because they have to guess and predict what they think the shape should be. I also address problem-solving skills in lesson one instruction, by asking the students to also predict how to cut the carrot after I tell them that it is supposed to be in the shape of a matchstick (V1: 4:40). Engaging them in this way will help them stay engaged, and promote thinking about how they will get a carrot, a round cylindrical object, into perfectly rectangular sticks.

In lesson two, I think I also elicited student responses by engaging with them in groups and individually. Students are kind of forced into an environment where their career and technical skills, and problem-solving skills become necessary to utilize. They have seen me demonstrate it, but now they need to show that they can do it. Because I can only work

with one group at a time, a lot of the students need to problem solve within their groups without much help from me. By setting up this type of environment, the students are tested on their understanding of these skills (career and technical as well as problem-solving) by whether or not they can make a quality product and follow directions. They are shown doing this within their groups at (V2: 6:55) where one student helps another one out by turning down the stove top heat, shown again at (V2: 7:10) where students plate their food and serve each other, and (V2: 8:20) where two students are working together to add the sauce to their stir-fry. The environment of the classroom, the relationship and behavior expectations I have placed on the students when they are in their kitchen units, and the direction from me when I come around to see how they are doing, all help to promote thinking on the student's part. They also all help to guide the students in the direction of conceptual understanding for career and technical education, as well as problem solving skills.

Developing an understanding of concepts, skills, and problem-solving

The instructional strategies used in these lessons I think did an effective job of developing the student's understanding of family and consumer sciences concepts, career and technical skills, and problem-solving strategies. In lesson one, my primary instructional strategy is modeling. Using the document projector to show every step that the student's will need to take when they practice the cut themselves I think is a very effective way of demonstrating what I want students to achieve through this learning segment, because it helps students, especially visual learners, be able to engage with the material in a real way. The modeling instructional strategy is shown through the first clip from (V1: 2:18-7:25). Another instructional strategy that is shown in the first clip in lesson one is the method of projecting the document that the students are also using. (V1: 0:32-0:50). In this section of the clip, I am showing the knife skills worksheet that the students received the day before. With this sheet, they are supposed to draw pictures of the knife cuts they learn today as well as write tips they need to remember when they are practicing the cuts themselves. They will also use this sheet to peer evaluate each other. I think that this instructional material is not only effective because I am displaying it and explaining what they should be doing during instruction, but it also acts as a note taking sheet for them, guiding them to make progress in their conceptual understanding of the topic. That way, when they are practicing this technical skill, they can refer to the sheet they took notes on to problem solve in the kitchens if they get stuck on what to do next or cannot remember how to make the specific cut. This is also helpful for them because they are involving themselves in the learning with note taking, and it is up to them to write down what will help them most during the lesson, making them a part of their own learning process. Also by peer grading each other, students will be learning problem-solving skills because they will be able to critically analyze their peer's skills, hopefully helping to promote accuracy in their own skills. One other instructional tool that was used in lesson one was at the beginning of the first clip (V1: 0:00-0:32). In this section of the clip, I am explaining to the class what they will be learning today, as well as addressing why knife skills are important and why we are learning them. I also tell the students the connection that I hope for them to make with the stir-fry that we will be making and the nutrients that we will be learning about. I also tell them that in order to do the unit well this week, they need to know how to use knife skills well. This instructional strategy I think really helps clear up any confusion about what we will be learning, because that is one of the first questions that I receive every day from students. By letting them know before we start what we will address, they won't be surprised by the content and they will know what to expect to look for in my lessons and instruction, aiding in their conceptual understanding of family and consumer sciences by recognizing the objective of the unit.

In lesson two, some of these strategies are used again, but others are implemented as well that help students' conceptual understanding, technical skills, and problem solving skills in the classroom. First of all, the students get to use the classroom. It is very uniquely interactive, which will help them in their practice of these technical skills. Not only does the environment help promote student understanding, the materials they use while cooking help further their knowledge about this technical aspect of everyday life. If they have not before, they will have the opportunity to utilize cutting boards, chef's knives, work with carrots, celery, cabbage, and onions, as well as a variety of other ingredients from the sauce. They will use saucapans, large skillets, mixing techniques, measuring techniques, and have the responsibility of doing dishes and cleaning. All of these things as well as working in groups are examples of what instructional materials will help them learn career and technical skills because it teaches them how to work as a team, and responsibility in independently living like cleaning (V2: whole video).

The other instructional strategy that I implement a lot in this unit is to provide individual instruction. The environment that is set up when they are cooking promotes team work within their groups, but also allows me to go around the classroom and offer individualized instruction on whatever a particular group is struggling with. This is shown throughout the video (V2: 0:00; 6:15; and other places).

5. Analysis of teaching

For the most part, I think my instruction went fairly well. However, there is always room for improvement to make a better lesson. A large opportunity that was missed in this unit I think was checking for understanding on knife skills. Having the students peer grade each other was good, but I think I would spend an extra day or two to really make sure that each student felt confident in the skills, instead of rushing them along to the next cut. I will likely go back in a different unit, however, and check and see if the student's remember these skills and if they can repeat them and hone their skills, but maybe cook the vegetables in a different way so that students get more exposure of different ways to cook. However, I do think the main goal was achieved because all of the students had vegetables that were aligned with the goal of the finished product. I would also try to really strengthen their understanding of knife skills by not only portraying it visually, or by having them do it themselves, but also by having them teach their peers. I think this would really set in stone the practice of the different knife skills. I think this could be possible by having the students, instead of just peer grade, also instruct their peers while they are cutting. I think I would try demonstrating all of the cuts on one day and assigning each person in the kitchen a different cut to teach. On the first day they could pay specific attention to the cut they are supposed to teach, and the next day, I would have them go to their kitchens and get a second demonstration from the student that is in charge of that specific cut, and then have each student practice. This way, students will all still get the opportunity to watch my demonstration but can really focus and become an expert on one because they will have to teach it. Then, the student "teachers" will reinforce the material and the students will get one more support in figuring out the concept of the knife cut. This would hopefully help my IEP students because a lot of their accommodations address making the large assignments smaller, including visual supports, and repetition. All of these accommodations would be addressed by breaking each cut down a little bit more to help the students grasp the concepts better.

Another thing I would change about the instruction is on day three. Although I think it was a good idea to analyze the stir-fry recipe and connect what nutrients were in it to the content that we had be learning, I think it would be helpful to make this activity more interactive. I think by having the students do it themselves or in pairs, without me guiding their discussion might be more effective because it would allow them to search and find the material on their own, and really seek to learn the material themselves instead of me asking and then telling. I could have different stations set up around the room with the ingredients we used. Then, instead of showing the labels on the document projector, the students would have to go on a scavenger hunt of sorts to find the nutrients of the ingredients that they were not sure about. This would also help my student who is an English language learner because it will be interactive and could allow him more time to actually read and understand the food labels, instead of trying to quickly grasp what I say about them.

Changes for improvement

I think that these few changes to my instruction would really improve student learning. First, by making the knife skills lesson a little bit longer, and maybe extending it to two or three days could really help the students grasp the skills better, especially those students with IEPs who appreciate larger or complex assignments to be broken down into smaller, more manageable tasks.

Having the students teach each other the knife skills goes along with the constructivist theory. By demonstrating the knife skills and allowing the students to practice on their own, provides good learning to about 75% of students. However, by expanding on that learning, and having the students teach each other, the percent of learning that occurs increases to 90% because they are paying more attention to the content because they have to teach it and are immediately using their learning. It also includes the concept of repetition, and helps the IEP students and all the students to reinforce the ideas and skills they are learning.

Lastly, by making day three more interactive, I think the students would benefit a lot. I noticed that they were definitely understanding the material, but they also seemed a little bored when we just discussed the ingredients in the stir-fry and what nutrients they provided. Making the classroom an interactive scavenger hunt of sorts, where students would have to really find the nutrient information by personally looking for it goes along well with John Dewey's theory that students thrive when they are allowed to experience and interact with curriculum, having an opportunity to take part in their own learning. I also think that this in general would help them stay entertained in the topic, and better their understanding of reading food labels. Then, they would be more prepared for the assessment because each student would have had to individually find the nutrients the stir-fry provided instead of just listening or possibly engaging in conversation about it. This method would help my English language learner, because he could then engage with the material on his own or with help from his peers, and would be able to read the information, instead of just quickly hearing it from me.